

this issue. I cannot support this increase, especially under the current circumstances with so much unfinished business.

Unfortunately, many initiatives I support were also included in this package. Among them is the repeal of the telephone excise tax, a revenue used originally to help fund the Spanish-American war. This three percent surcharge is among the most regressive taxes, and I was proud to be an early cosponsor of the effort to repeal it. In addition to cosponsoring the original legislation, I voted to repeal this tax when the repeal was offered as an amendment to the estate tax repeal.

In a time of unprecedented surpluses, we must fix some of the inequities in the tax code. I am disappointed we have not managed to accomplish more. Once again, this is indicative of the overly partisan nature of Senate activity, and this partisanship has blocked fair tax reform. Nonetheless, I am pleased we have at least resolved the federal telephone excise tax, a reform which will save all Americans \$51 billion over the next decade. I commend the major telephone providers for committing to pass fully these savings to consumers, and I once again regret that the unique and deplorable manner in which this Congress is fulfilling its responsibilities forced me to vote against this package.

CONGRATULATIONS TO KIM DAE-JUNG

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I would like to congratulate Kim Dae-jung, the President of South Korea, on receiving the Nobel Peace Prize for 2000. This award is well-earned for a great leader whom many call the "Nelson Mandela of Asia." President Kim's life-long dedication to peace and reconciliation is evident in the fact that he had been nominated for this award on 14 different occasions. Last Friday's announcement made President Kim his nation's first Nobel laureate, a source of great pride for the people of South Korea.

Kim Dae-jung has led an extraordinary life, highlighted by an unwavering commitment to democracy. In fact, throughout his career, President Kim has been willing to risk his own life in standing up for the principles that allow South Korea to be the great nation it is today.

President Kim has indeed paid a heavy price for speaking out against totalitarian rule. Shortly after his first run for President in 1971, Kim was nearly killed in a car accident that many believed to be an assassination attempt. Two years later, he was kidnapped by South Korean agents, ostensibly because he was perceived as a threat to the status quo. He would have been killed, had the United States not intervened. In the years that followed,

President Kim survived jailings, house arrest, exile and numerous beatings.

Three years ago, President Kim campaigned on an innovative, open approach to reconciliation with North Korea, which he called the "sunshine policy." This policy of building ties with the North is on a scale that has not been seen in the history of postwar Korea. After winning the election, President Kim, a forgiving and religious man above all, pardoned the former military rulers who tried to kill him as his first act in office. He has also been a positive force for South Korea's economy which was at a low point when President Kim was elected. The South Korean economy grew by 10.2 percent in 1999 and is projected to grow by 6 percent in 2000.

President Kim's "sunshine policy" culminated in a June summit between the leaders of North Korea and South Korea. The summit was a success, and set a tremendous precedent for the relationship between the two countries. Speaking of the meeting, President Kim said, "the Korean people are one; we have a common fate. There is nothing we cannot do if we make steady efforts with good faith and patience." The possibility for continued conversation between North and South gives me great hope that the two sides have taken the first steps to a true and lasting peace.

The rebuilding process between the Koreas has been enhanced by several small but meaningful achievements. North Korea and South Korea have pledged to work on rebuilding roads and rail lines between the two countries. Earlier this summer, a brief reunion occurred of families separated by the Korean war 50 years ago. Just last month, the entire world was moved when the North Korean and South Korean teams marched together in the opening ceremonies of the Sydney Olympics.

I had the opportunity to meet President Kim in 1986 when he was under house arrest. I was very moved by his courage and faith and thought that he would some day lead his beloved nation. It is with great happiness that I take this opportunity to congratulate Kim Dae-jung and the people of South Korea on this historic occasion.

A SALUTE TO THE SAILORS OF THE U.S.S. "COLE"

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I am deeply saddened by the loss of the brave men and women of the U.S.S. *Cole*. October 12, 2000 will long be remembered as a day of heavy emotions for our armed forces and all American people. All of our hearts have been consumed with anger and sorrow at the senseless act of terrorism that, on that day, left seventeen United States sailors dead, and thirty-nine injured. All young, all promising, all dedicated to

defending America's values and way of life.

But my heart is also filled with pride in these men and women. Our sailors served in the finest traditions of the Navy, selflessly dedicating themselves to serving our country with bravery and integrity. And I rise today to honor those who gave their lives in the line of duty. We will not forget your superb service and ultimate sacrifice.

As I extend my heartfelt sympathy to the families of the *Cole* Sailors, let me also say to the world that the United States will not rest until those responsible for this attack are held accountable for this atrocious destruction of innocent American life. Let there be no mistake. We will use every tool in our arsenal to track down and charge our adversaries for this cowardly act.

The British poet A.E. Housman wrote, "The troubles of our proud and angry dust are from eternity and shall not fail. Bear them we can, and if we can, we must." Housman's poem speaks to our strong tradition of persistence and moral courage to stand up for our values. Let our resilience signal to the world that no terrorist attack can encroach our resolve. We will not shrink to defeat, but grow stronger in our commitment to securing peace and stability throughout this nation's areas of interest. Seventeen U.S.S. *Cole* sailors did not suffer tragic deaths in vain. They died protecting freedom, and defending the greatest nation on Earth.

So now, I join my colleagues and the families of the U.S.S. *Cole* crew in solemn prayer for these brave sailors, the protectors of America's great democracy. God bless you and God bless America.

FEDERAL PRISONER HEALTH CARE COPAYMENT ACT

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I am pleased the President recently signed into law the Federal Prisoner Health Care Copayment Act. As you know, Senator JON KYL and I introduced last year a bill to require Federal prisoners to pay a nominal fee when they initiate certain visits for medical attention. Fees collected from prisoners will either be paid as restitution to victims or be deposited into the Federal Crime Victims' Fund. My State of South Dakota is one of 38 States that have implemented State-wide prisoner health care copayment programs. The Department of Justice supported extending this prisoner health care copayment program to Federal prisoners in an attempt to reduce unnecessary medical procedures and ensure that adequate health care services are available for prisoners who need them.

My interest in the prisoner health care copayment issue came from discussions I had in South Dakota with a number of law enforcement officials